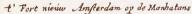


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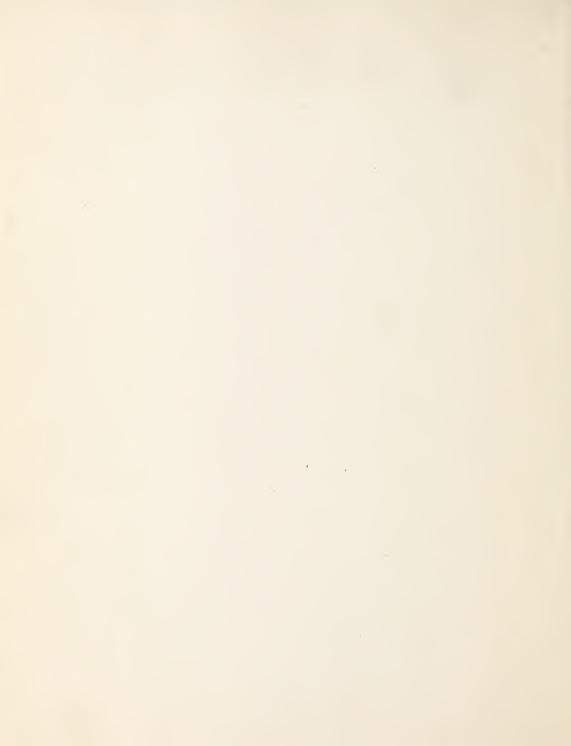
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GRANT MONUMENT ASSOCIATION.



Grant & Banquet

Thursday Evening April 27th, 1899%

SPEECHES OF

Hon. J. P. DOLLIVER and Mr. AUGUSTUS THOMAS

PRESENTED TO THE

Long Island Historical Society

BY

Col. Liewis C. Hopkins. of Brooklyn SPEECHES OF Hon. J. P. DOLLIVER
AND Mr. AUGUSTUS THOMAS
AT THE BANQUET GIVEN IN
CELEBRATION OF THE SEVENTYSEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
BIRTH OF GENERAL U. S. GRANT,
AT "THE ASTORIA" ON THURSDAY,
APRIL TWENTY-SEVENTH, 1899 ...

RELEASED FROM THE COLLECTIONS
OF THE LONG ISLAND WISTORICAL SOCIETY.

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GRANT'S BIRTHDAY...
April Twenty-seventh, 1899.

Gen. Wager Swayne Presided at the Banquet.

The banquet being finished General Swayne called the guests to order and said:

Gentlemen: On the banks of the Hudson, within the City limits, the people of this City, with the approval of the State and Nation have erected a mausoleum as a monument to personal character, to magnificent achievement, and to patriotism! The Committee under whose auspices that monument was erected, and by whose care it is preserved, also each year on the birthday of the hero invite us. by an assemblage such as this, to further commemorate his virtues, inculcate his example and immortalize his memory by stimulating in ourselves those things which were in him, which we are here to celebrate, that he to that extent may live again in us. The man, the motives and the cause which have thus brought us here, could not well have been more exalted, nor could the situation of our country well be happier or more glorious than at present, nor the circumstances under which we meet be more enjoyable. To all of these, gentlemen, I bid you welcome, in the name of the Committee, and rejoice with you that we may so enjoy them together.

And as the first to give expression to those thoughts which are appropriate, I have the pleasure of introducing to you the Honorable Jonathan P. Dolliver, now and for years past a distinguished and valuable member of the Congress of the United States.

seen the Canon of Westminster open the doors of that venerable monument to admit the silent American soldier into the household of English spoken fame. (Applause.)

The unchallenged place of General Grant in history expresses the value of his service to his own nation and to his own age and to all nations and all ages. Without a trace of selfish ambition in his entire career, he was in a high sense from his youth up guided by an inward monition that he was to play a supreme part in the arena of National affairs. Twice in his life, by his own modest statement, he distinctly felt within himself an intimation of the future: once on the day he graduated at West Point and again after Vicksburg fell. It may be an idle fancy, but it is not hard to believe, that every step he took-from the farm to the Academy, from the Academy to the frontier, from the frontier through the Mexican campaign, and thence to private life, a life of toil and self suppression, from which, with a timid and hesitating request for a small command, he emerged into the Union Army-was part of the preparation, the post-graduate course for the full equipment of this mysterious man. The greatest

of his lieutenants said, "To me he is a mystery, and I believe he is a mystery to himself." If he had said to his classmates, "I will one day take Scott's place on Review," he would have been laughed out of the Army. If, at Vicksburg, he had announced that he was the one general in the service able to bring the Rebellion to an end, he would have gone the way of all the others. Yet both these ideas were in his head, and we cannot regret that in the shadow of the end, when in pain and anguish he was writing the story of his public life, he was moved to throw this light upon the hidden life he lived within himself. There are those who impeach the whole social fabric because it imposes upon all a strenuous struggle for existence, and we have often heard that opportunity alone makes the difference between failure and success. That is the philosophy of a little world: for we know that without burdens there is no strength, and that in exposed places, where the storms of all skies beat upon it, there grows a rugged fibre of manhood which is the master of opportunity, a victor over circumstances, a crowned athlete in the games of fortune and achievement.

General Grant belongs to the new departure, which dates from 1860. Though a man of mature years, he can scarcely be said to have lived before that time. He did not take enough interest in the Army to retain his commission, nor in his Missouri farm to make a living out of it, nor in the leather business in Galena to go back to lock up the store after he heard of the fall of Fort Sumpter. He had only voted once and his politics were so ambiguous, that, with the inheritance of a Whig. he joined a Know Nothing lodge, and while his sympathies were with Douglas, he drilled the Lincoln Wideawakes. It almost looks as if Providence needing him for the new age, kept him clear and free from the confusion of many tongues that preceded it. It is well nigh impossible for us to make our way through the political wilderness of fifty years ago. The most pathetic thing in the history of the Nation is the picture of our fathers poring for generations over the musty volumes of the old debates-wearing the Federalist and Madison papers to the covers—in their vain and hopeless search for the foundation of the faith. Washington

grandly comprehended the Constitution he had helped to make, but this did not keep the legislature of Virginia from disowning its authority while he yet lived in honored retirement at Mt. Vernon. Webster, supreme among the giants of those days, vindicated the National Institutions in speeches that have become classic in the literature of our tongue. But nobody can read them without a sense of humiliation that his antagonists were able to dog the steps of that lofty argument with the minutes of the Hartford Convention, showing Massachusetts on the very precipice of treason before she had finished building Bunker Hill Monument (laughter). Jackson guit the game of politics long enough to swear his mighty oath, "By the Eternal, the Union must be and shall be preserved," but that did not prevent the State in which he was born from organizing her people against the Federal Government, while old soldiers of the Revolution still survived among them. Little by little the Nation had shrivelled and diminished, and the important States increased until, as older men among us can remember, the money lenders of Europe

refused to take the Bonds of the United States unless they were endorsed by the State of Virginia (laughter). They coolly anticipated that they would be able to locate the State of Virginia after the United States of America had disappeared from the map of the earth.

I would not heedlessly disparage the statesmen of that period. If they were called to deal with a situation to which they were not equal, it was one for which they were not responsible. James Buchanan was not in any sense an ordinary man. He was all his life a leader among men, though left at the end of his generation impotently trying to answer elemental and volcanic questions with the dead phrases of an obsolete vocabulary. The conclusion had come. The time for rewriting the Constitution was at hand. The joint debate of lawyers had become an offence to heaven as well as a nuisance among men. The shadows upon the path of the Republic had grown too dense to walk in. Yet the truth was never altogether without witnesses. There were always some eyes that could see and some ears that could hear. But the mobs that

dragged Anthony Burns through the streets of Boston, what did they care for the testimony of John Quincy Adams, still eloquent in the grave? And the champions of freedom worn out with their long vigil in the night of slavery, frantically denouncing the Constitution as a Covenant with Hell, what had they learned from the chosen son of New England, who, in the debate with Hayne had filled the old Senate Chamber, (where the Supreme Court now sits), with an intellectual splendor which lights up its narrow walls until this day? (Applause.)

Statesmen and people were in the dark together, and while few could decern the signs of the times, and none dare to look the future in the face, the dawn was nearer than any thought or hoped; for within two years from the day the militia of Virginia paraded about the scaffold of John Brown, the soul of that poor old immortal mad man was marching before the mightest armed host the world ever saw, upon whose banners were written the sublime promises of Public Liberty.

That was our heroic age, and out of it came forth our ideal heroes: Lincoln and

But, "Such a criticism of military skill," if you will allow me to use the words of Mr. Blaine, "is idle chatter in the face of an unbroken career of victory." When he was appointed Lieutenant General and placed in command of all the Armies of the Union he exercised military control over a greater number of men than any General since the invention of fire-arms. In the campaigns of 1864 and 1865 the Armies of the Union contained in the aggregate not less than a million men. The movements of all these vast forces were kept in harmony by his comprehensive mind and in the grand consummation which insured Union and Liberty, his name became inseparably associated with the true glory of his country.

I care nothing for Alexander or Caesor or Napoleon. So far as I can make out not one of them is entitled to the respect of civilized men. Not one of them stood for an idea worth fighting for, much less worth dying for. The Duke of Weimar used to tell his friends when they talked to him of Napoleon, to be of good courage—"This Napoleonism is unjust, a falsehood, and cannot last." It did not last, and to-

day there is hardly a trace of the Little Corsican in Europe except his grave. There can be no great soldier without a great cause, and no cause is great that is not right. It was the sublime fortune of Ulysses S. Grant to rise to the Chief Command of an Army, whose line of march was upon the highway of human progress; which carried with its muskets the future of civilization and in its heart the sovereign will of God. (Applause.)

The French essayist to whose grotesque commentary on General Grant as a soldier I have before alluded, discerned at least one thing in him for a grudging eulogy. He says that he was "A good citizen." Without intending it he has touched the secret of this unique career, both in the field and in the Capitol—the secret of all real service of mankind—the thing that is making kings ridiculous and thrones unnecessary, which has abolished the aristocracy of the sword and made that awkward and absurd weapon no longer the master but the obedient servant of the State. The feature of our Civil War least comprehended by foreign critics, and only partially comprehended by ourselves, was the

fact that as soon as a conflict was over all sides were willing to put an end to strife and to take up the broken relations of civil life in harmony and good will. From a human standpoint the advice of General Scott to Mr. Seward to "Let the erring sisters go in peace," contained a measure of wisdom: for it must have made men sick at heart to think of Civil War with its awful ministry of blood and its legacy still more terrible of fued and passion and sullen malice left over to plague the Nation long after the victory of arms was won. A mere statesman in the place of Lincoln and a mere soldier in the place of Grant might indeed have maintained the Government at Washington and overthrown the Rebellion in the field. But the world was entitled to a larger outcome of these four tempestuous years—the new birth of freedom, the new National unity, the new outlook of the Republic in the midst of the ages. There were voices heard that lifted the Civil War above all bloodshed of history; one at the beginning saying with tender eloquence, "We are not enemies, but friends"; the other at the end, in words that transfigured the face of victory

with a divine illumination, saying, "Let us have peace." Is it any wonder that within a single generation every evil passion of the strife is dead, every bitter memory of the past forgotten? Is it any wonder that the boys who cheered the defenders of Vicksburg as they stacked their arms: who divided their rations with the army of Northern Virginia while Grant and Lee sat down to talk together as comrades and countrymen, have done their part, with the boys in Gray, to bring in the new era of American patriotism? Volumes have been written to explain why the Rebellion came to naught, and dispute has followed dispute as to which army was victorious in this engagement or in that. while some have even claimed that the South was never whipped, but only wore itself out whipping us. But here is a victory in which both the old armies have a sharethat rich and splendid conquest of the hearts of men: noblier and worthier in the sight of Heaven than captive trophies or the spoils of war.

It was once in some quarters a fashion to exaggerate the reputation of General Grant as a soldier as a background on which to draw

a mean picture of his figure in civil life. I have no sympathy with any such opinion. It is not credible that God endowed a man with the faculties required to order the steps of a million men in arms and at the same time left his eyes holden that he should not see the needs of his age and the destiny of his country. What man of his time had a clearer appreciation of the value of the Public Credit or did as much he to establish the disordered finances of the Civil War upon a safe foundation. (Applause.) When he took the oath of office in 1869 he found the country filled with clamor about the payment of the public debt, some demanding its settlement in depreciated notes; others calling for new issues of paper promises, the cheap and easy product of the engraver's art, with which to wipe out the bonds which had been issued for the common defense. Into that noisy controversy came this calm and immovable man and from the East Portico of the Capitol uttered words that have become part of the National character, "Let it be understood that no repudiator of one farthing of the National Debt will be trusted in any public place," and from that hour the credit of the great Republic, without limit and without terms, has been as good as shining gold in all the market places of the earth. (Applause.)

I count it also as a part of General Grant's place in history that he gave the sanction of his office to the most benignant treaty ever drawn between two nationsthe treaty by which a deep-seated international difference was submitted to a high tribunal instead of being made a cause of War between two kindred peoples, which in the order of Providence are to stand side by side for the freedom of the world. (Applause.) Thus the man of war becomes the advocate of the world's peace, and turning to his own countrymen in his second appearance to take the oath as President, he makes a confession of his faith in the future of our race, so serene and devout that it reflects the inspired visions of old, and gives reality to the rapt aspirations of the poets and prophets of all centuries.

In his last annual message General Grant laments the fact that he was "Called to the office of chief executive

without any previous political training." He was too busy in the years that intervened between his auction of stock and farm machinery on the little Missouri homestead and his entrance into the White House to learn much about politics, either as a science or an art. But whatever he lacked in the experience that makes the seasoned politician, he had at least learned the most essential lesson in the education of an American statesman: that the people can be trusted to reach a just conclusion in the settlement of all questions which affect their welfare. It was that steady confidence that enabled him, when the Santo Domingo treaty was rejected by the Senate in a storm of vituperation from which even the President did not escape, to appeal to the people of the United States and in the language of his special message, to seek a decision from "That tribunal whose convictions so seldom err and against whose will I have no policy to enforce." (Applause.) Because he believed in his countrymen, he had faith in his country; and he expressed the firm conviction that the civilized world is tending toward government by the people through their chosen representa-

tives. "I do not share," said he in his second inaugural, "in the apprehension held by many as to the danger of governments being weakened or destroyed by reason of the extension of their territory. Applause.) Commerce, education, rapid transit of thought and matter by telegraph have changed all this." It is not possible to think of him in the midst of such problems as now besets our affairs, deliberately adding to the National burden by defaming his country in order to exalt the motives of a mob of swift footed barbarians in the Phillipine Islands. At least once in his administration, at a crisis in the Cuban situation, he ordered the Navy to prepare for action, and if the brief conflict with Spain, which the present government was not able to avoid, had come in his time, it would simply have anticipated the grave events of the past year; leaving us twenty years ago, with vastly less preparation, exactly where we are to-day. In that case who can imagine General Grant directing the Navy to throw its victories into the sea, or ordering our brave little armies of occupation to run headlong for their transports, leaving life and property

and the social order in the keeping of halfnaked tribes. (Applause.) It requires no fanciful interpretation of the biography of General Grant to hear the voice of the old Commander, the voice of the battle fields on which the flag of the American Republic was sanctified to the service of civilization, bidding his countrymen go forward in the fear of God, strong and patient under the responsibilities of their day and generation.

You have builded here a stately tomb which shall bear his name and guard his dust till the Heavens be no more. When the Nation builds to him a monument in its Capitol, as they one day will, it will not bear the inscription of his name, for like the column of Waterloo, proposed for Wellington in the fiction of Victor Hugo, instead of the figure of a man it will bear on high the statute of a people. (Prolonged Applause.)

SPEECH OF Mr. AUGUSTUS THOMAS.



General Swayne in introducing Mr Thomas said:

We have with us to-night a leading author and playwright, Mr. Augustus H. Thomas.



R. CHAIRMAN and Gentlemen of the Association:

The Toastmaster's pleasure in introducing me is no greater than the willingness with which I waive all claims to the capital H that he so generously placed in my name, (laughter) and, while I am emboldened to take this seeming exception to one utterance of his, I should like, as a man coming from that section of our country lying West of the Mississippi, to say, for its credit, that I saw nothing in the splendid oration of the gentlemen from Iowa (Mr. Dolliver) to indicate that he needed sleep. (Laughter.) The Toastmaster, in introducing him, remarked the astonishing fact that the orator had arrived in the City and had consented to keep his appointment at this

dinner without the preparation of slumber. We Western folks don't prepare for a banquet that way. (Laughter.) We generally observe a rigid preliminary fast. (Laughter.) Nap after the feast, yes, not before. (Laughter.) I am inclined to think that General Swayne was influenced by overhearing a story that the distinguished attorney on my left (Mr. Elihu Root) told me during the dinner. A resident of Philadelphia went to his doctor to get a remedy for imsomnia. The doctor made a minute examination of the man, questioning him closely, and said, "Well, there doesn't seem to be anything the matter with you, sir, certainly nothing organic. I think, if you were to take a glass of beer, some light beer, let us say Lemp's," made in St. Louis (laughter). I am also requested to advertise the Jamison whiskey (laughter). The doctor said. "Drink one glass of the beer before retiring, and I think you'll find your insomnia overcome."

"Why, bless your doctor," the Philadelphian answered, "I sleep all right at night, it's the daytime that bothers me." (Laughter.)

I think it was General Horace Porter (applause) who said: "Boston is not a locality, it is a state of mind." (Laughter.) To me, Grant is not a personage. He is an epoch. I was not, as has been suggested, a school boy when Grant was making history. I have no recollection of his deeds. All my inspiration, at that time, was drawn from the bottle, that source of much of our present enthusiasm. I sprang to arms, when the war began, but the arms were my mother's. (Laughter) That tragic period, so full of happening for many of the gentlemen here, was to me a morning and a night.

My own boy, aged four, said to me yesterday, "Father, don't you remember that day when we went to the beach? There was a wood fire in the big fireplace at night." He had been to the beach nearly every summer day in his little life, and every winter evening had seen a wood fire in the big fireplace. For him, the water and a blazing fire epitomized his life, and upon his tender memory, the summer and the winter, which the beach and hearth expressed, were a single day. I understood him, because my own earliest recollections are so compressed.

There is a morning, filled with the music of martial bands, and the color of waving banners. I am just tall enough to reach the door knob with my mother's help-A booted trooper at the door asks for Captain Thomas, while in the gutter stand two champing steeds, with saddles of black and brass, deep as the baby's cradle. I see my father ride through the city Park, and note, with wonderment, my mother's tears. The sound of "Grant-Grant-" is through it all like some infiltrating and saturating echothat meaningless sound of "Grant," which seems to have some trouble with another called "Henry Donelson," and a third entity, Pittsburg, that is always landing. There are shouts and salvos, and much marching of men. "General Lyon No. 4," and, on a banner, the picture of a slight, and blue-eyed soldier, with, above, the legend, "Thy Radicalism saved Missouri." Mingling with the cheers that greet these colors, there is the derisive song:

"It was on the tenth of May,
Captain Kelly was away,
The Hessians surrounded Camp Jackson."
Years afterwards, I learned that the
"Hessians" were the loyal Germans of St.

Louis, who marched to her defence under Frank P. Blair. (Applause.) The man, whose radicalism had taken the State from her intention to secede, and into the doubtful column, was the hero of Wilson Creek, the same Lyon, who so won the confidence of the Northern adherents, when the national Arsenal was menaced, and when his superiors, fearing that some nearby buildings would make it impossible for him to observe an approaching enemy, asked Lyon how he proposed to meet that difficulty. He answered, "When I hear that Price has started, I shall blow up those buildings with a few kegs of gunpowder."

Another happening of that Homeric day, is a Fair, where my mother holds me high in the crowd, that I may see a child, but little older than myself, impersonating the "Old Woman who lived in a Shoe, and had so many children she didn't know what to do." I am told that the little girl with the cap and spectacles is Nellie Grant, selling her dolls to buy clothes for soldiers; and now there drifts into my ideas vaguely the conception that this echo, this Shibboleth, this "Grant" is man, a father, not nearly so

kind, and low-voiced as my own father, not so tender, nor so full of laughter, nor so long away from home as my father, but still a father, tangible and human, and, maybe, good to that little girl, at whom the men and women wave their handkerchiefs.

Then there is the illumination, when the night is come. The candles stuck in potatoes behind the tri-colored tissue paper in the windows, and the tar barrels are crackling in the street. Suddenly all is dark. I am frightened with an undefined menace. The young mother, in her night-robe is kneeling with me at the open window, one blanket above us both—the sky filled with the twinkle of the summer stars, and the air heavy with the weedy smell from the bottom lands of Illinois. Yet it is none of these, but rather a tump-tump-like pulse, a rythm, that my mother whispers is the tramp of soldiers.

It was the heart-beat of a startled nation. I can recall it now, with all the mystery and magic of the potent and unseen, and it is moving to some ghost-like place, called "Island No. 10," or "Vicksburg," and Grant is there in whispers.

That is my "Grant," a member of that Apocrypha of the nursery, to which belong the Bluebeards, and the Giant-Killers.

I saw him once, in the Spring of 1870, at Washington, when the Senate and House had gathered in the Hall of Representatives, at the funeral of General George Thomas. (Applause) The imperial Blaine was in the chair, and in a semicircle of seats in front of his desk, were the Cabinet and a little, high-shouldered, round-headed man with whiskers. Grant! I felt the same shock that a little girl of to-day, full of "Alice in Wonderland" would feel, if she were shown Lewis Carroll, and told "that is your story."

But that wasn't Grant, any more than those ashes on the banks of the Hudson are Grant. That was only Grant's contact with humanity—the visible point, through which circled and passed, the benign and sympathetic currents of a universe. And when I heard the guns of the Raleigh, the other day, roaring their salute to the white, and silent edifice on Riverside, while the multitudes upon two shores made answer for the nation, I felt that the Grant of my

boyhood, that awesome factor, which had been alarm and lullaby, was here again.

Alexander was a soldier, impulsively and unevenly personal. He ordered for the wife of Darius the funeral of an Empress, and gave the ransom of a kingdom to a common soldier, who had shared the burden of a mule; but he destroyed the independence of the Grecian States, and enforced the sepulture of Democracy for nearly two thousand years. Napoleon was a brilliant Captain, invulnerable in attack, and the incarnation of Empire, but he was so jealous of preference, that he wrestled with the Pope at his coronation, in a scrabble to be the first into his chariot. Grant wore an old coat. that a vanguished commander might not feel the pomp of victory, and when he refused to take the side-arms of the officers. and the horses of the private soldiers, though he ran counter to the rancor and fever of his day he anticipated the generosity of a generation yet unborn (Applause.)

The Chairman—"The capital H which I put into Mr. Thomas' name, was the one he left out of the name of General George H. Thomas." (Laughter.)

Mr. Thomas—"I dropped the H in deference to the Member of Parliament on my

right. (Mr. Jamison.) (Laughter.)





















